



National Science Foundation  
4201 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, Virginia 22230

Directorate for Biological Sciences  
Office of the Assistant Director

October 17, 2008

NSF 08-077

Subject: Microbial Systems in the Biosphere (MSB)

Dear Colleague,

The Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) is augmenting funding to programmatic areas throughout the Directorate for research in microbial biology. The Directorate invites investigators who would have submitted proposals to the recently ended Microbial Observatories and Microbial Interactions and Processes (MO/MIP) solicitation ([http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm\\_summ.jsp?pims\\_id=6166&org=MCB](http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=6166&org=MCB)) to submit proposals to relevant core programs/clusters as described on the BIO web site. Examples of programs to which proposals may be submitted include but are not limited to Biotic Surveys and Inventories (<http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=DEB>), Genes and Genome Systems (<http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=MCB>), Symbiosis, Defense and Self-recognition (<http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=IOS>), and Advances in Biological Informatics (<http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=DBI>). Investigators are also encouraged to consult the Life in Transition (LiT) and Advancing the Tree of Life (AToL) Dear Colleague letters (see Recently Announced Funding Opportunities on the BIO homepage at <http://www.nsf.gov/BIO>). This augmentation recognizes that the many diverse properties of microbes make them excellent models to address fundamental biological questions and is intended to enhance microbial research supported by the core programs in BIO.

**This activity is not a special competition or new program.** Titles of proposals submitted in response to this Dear Colleague Letter about Microbial Systems in the Biosphere should be prefaced with "MSB:" and submitted to an existing BIO cluster/program according to the regular target or deadline dates. Target and deadline dates for applicable programmatic areas may be found on the cluster web pages for each Division in the Biology Directorate, accessible from the homepage at <http://www.nsf.gov/BIO>. Proposals may be submitted via FastLane or Grants.gov. Detailed information about the FastLane System is available from the FastLane website at <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>. For full proposals submitted via Grants.gov, see NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov (<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/docs/grantsgovguide.pdf>).

This Dear Colleague Letter will be in effect for FY 2009 and FY 2010. The review process will follow standard practices of the BIO program to which the proposal is submitted. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the Microbial Systems Working Group ([bio-mswg@nsf.gov](mailto:bio-mswg@nsf.gov)) to discuss their ideas for proposal submission and relevant topics of interest, and to gain advice about programmatic areas that they may wish to consider for proposal submission. We look forward to discussing your ideas.

Sincerely,

James P. Collins  
Assistant Director for Biological Sciences  
National Science Foundation